



MARYLAND GAZETTE.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 1800.

A FUNERAL ORATION,

In honour of the memory of
GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Late general of the armies of the United States,
Prepared and delivered at the request of congress, at
the German Lutheran church, on Thursday, the
26th of December, by

MAJOR-GENERAL HENRY LEE,

One of the representatives from the state of Virginia.
In obedience to your will, I rise your humble
organ, with the hope of executing a part of the
system of public mourning which you have been
pleased to adopt, commemorative of the death of the
most illustrious and most beloved personage this coun-
try has ever produced; and which, while it transmits
to posterity your sense of the awful event, faintly re-
presents your knowledge of the consummate excellence
you so cordially honour.

Desperate indeed is any attempt on earth to meet
correspondently this dispensation of Heaven: for,
while with pious resignation we submit to the will of
so all-gracious Providence, we can never cease la-
menting in our finite view of omnipotent wisdom, the
heart rending privation for which our nation weeps.
When the civilized world shakes to its centre: when
every moment gives birth to strange and momentous
changes; when our peaceful quarter of the globe, ex-
empt as it happily has been from any share in the
slaughter of the human race, may yet be compelled to
abandon her pacific policy, and to risk the doleful
casualties of war: What limit is there to the extent
of our loss? none within the reach of my words to
express; none which your feelings will not dis-
turb.

The founder of our federate republic—our bulwark
in war, our guide in peace, is no more. Oh that this
was but questionable! hope, the comforter of the
wretched, would pour into our agonized hearts its
balm dew. But, alas! there is no hope for us: our
Washington is removed for ever. Possessing the stout-
est frame, and purest mind, he had passed nearly to
his sixty-eighth year, in the enjoyment of high health,
when habituated by his care of us to neglect himself,
a slight cold, disregarded, became inconvenient on
Friday, oppressive on Saturday, and defying every
medical interposition, before the morning of Sunday,
put an end to the best of men. An end did I say—
his fame survives! bounded only by the limits of the
earth, and by the extent of the human mind. He
survives in our hearts, in the growing knowledge of
our children, in the affections of the good throughout
the world; and when our monuments shall be done
away; when nations now existing shall be no more:
when even our young and far spreading empire shall
have perished, still will our Washington's glory un-
faded shine, and die not, until love of virtue cease on
earth, or earth itself sink into chaos.

How, my fellow-citizens, shall I single to your
grateful hearts his pre-eminent worth! where shall I
begin in opening to your view a character throughout
sublime. Shall I speak of his warlike achievements,
all springing from obedience to his country's will—all
directed to his country's good?

Will you go with me to the banks of the Mononga-
hela, to see your youthful Washington, supporting in
the dismal hour of Indian victory, the ill-fated Brad-
dock, and saving, by his judgment and by his valour,
the remains of a defeated army, pressed by the con-
quering savage foe? Or, when oppressed America,
nobly resolving to risk her all in defence of her vi-
olated rights; he was elevated by the unanimous voice
of congress to the command of her armies: Will you
follow him to the high grounds of Boston, where, to an
undisciplined, courageous and virtuous yeomanry,
his presence gave the stability of system, and infused
the efficacy of love of country. Or shall I carry
you to the painful scenes of Long Island, York Island
and New-Jersey, when combating superior and gallant
armies, aided by powerful fleets, and led by chiefs
high in the roll of fame, he stood the bulwark of our
safety: undismayed by disaster, unchanged by change
of fortune. Or will you view him in the precarious
fields of Trenton, where deep gloom unnerving every
arm, reigned triumphant through our thinned, worn
down, unaided ranks: himself unmoved.—Dreadful
was the night; it was about this time of winter.—The
storm raged.—The Delaware rolling furiously with
floating ice forbade the approach of man. Washington,
left collected, viewed the tremendous scene—his coun-
try called; unappalled by surrounding dangers, he
passed to the hostile shore: he fought; he conquered.
The morning sun shined the American world. Our
country rose on the event; and her dauntless chief
parrying his blow, completed in the laws of Prince-
town, what his valour had conceived on the shores
of Delaware.

Thence to the strong grounds of Morris town, he
led his small but gallant band, and through an event-
ful winter, by the high efforts of his genius whose
matchless force was measurable only by the growth of
difficulties, he held in check formidable hostile legions,
conducted by a chief experienced in the art of war,
and famed for his valour on the ever memorable heights
of Abraham, where fell Wolf, Montcalm, and since
our much lamented Montgomery; all covered with
glory. In this fortunate interval, produced by his
masterly conduct, our fathers, ourselves, animated by
his resolute example, rallied around our country's
standard, and continued to follow our beloved chief,
through the various and trying scenes to which the
destinies of our union led.

Who is there that has forgotten the vales of Brandy-
wine—the fields of German town, or the plains of
Monmouth; every where present, want of every kind
obstructing, numerous and valiant armies, encounter-
ing, himself a host, he assuaged our sufferings, limited
our privations, and upheld our tottering republic.
Shall I display to you the spread of the fire of his soul,
by rehearsing the praises of the hero of Saratoga, and
his much loved compeer of the Carolina's? No; our
Washington wears not borrowed glory: To Gates—
to Green, he gave without reserve the applause due to
their eminent merit; and long may the chiefs of
Saratoga, and of Rutaw, receive the grateful respect
of a grateful people.

Moving in his own orbit, he imparted heat and
light to his most distant satellites; and combining the
physical and moral force of all within his sphere, with
irresistible weight he took his course, commiserating
folly, disdaining vice, disarming treachery and invigo-
rating despondency, until the auspicious hour arrived,
when, united with the intrepid forces of a potent and
magnanimous ally, he brought to submission the sice
conqueror of India; thus finishing his long career of
military glory with a lustre corresponding to his great
name, and in this his last act of war affixing the seal
of fate to our nation's birth.

To the horrid din of battle sweet peace succeeded
and our virtuous chief, mindful only of the common
good, in a moment tempting personal aggrandizement,
hushed the discontents of growing faction, and sur-
rendering his power into the hands from which he had
received it, converted his sword into a ploughshare,
teaching an admiring world that to be truly great, you
must be truly good.

Was I to stop here, the picture would be incom-
plete, and the task imposed unfinished—Great as was
our Washington in war, and much as did that great-
ness contribute to produce the American republic, it
is not in war alone his pre-eminence stands conspicu-
ous: his various talents combining all the capacities of
a statesman with those of a soldier, fitted him alike to
guide the councils and the armies of our nation.
Scarcely had he rested from his martial toils, while
his invaluable parental advice was still sounding in our
ears, when he who had been our shield and our sword,
was called forth to act a less splendid but a more im-
portant part.

Possessing a clear and penetrating mind, a strong
and a sound judgment, calmness and temper, for deli-
beration, with invincible firmness and perseverance in
resolutions maturely formed, drawing information from
all, acting from himself, with incorruptible in-
tegrity and unvarying patriotism: his own superiority
and the public confidence alike, placed him as the
man designed by Heaven to lead in the great political
as well as military events which have distinguished the
era of his life.

The finger of an over-ruling Providence, pointing
at Washington, was neither mistaken nor unobserved
when to realize the vast hopes to which our revolution
had given birth, a change of political system became
indispensable.

How novel, how grand the spectacle, independent
states stretched over an immense territory, and known
only by common difficulty, clinging to their union as
the rock of their safety, deciding by frank comparison
of their relative condition, to rear on that rock, under
the guidance of reason, a common government thro'
whose commanding protection, liberty and order, with
their long train of blessings should be safe to them-
selves, and the sure inheritance of their posterity.

This arduous task devolved on citizens selected by the
people, from knowledge of their wisdom and confi-
dence in their virtues. In this august assembly of sages
and of patriots, Washington of course was found—
and, as if acknowledged to be most wise, where all
were wise, with one voice he was declared their chief.
How well he merited this rare distinction, how faith-
ful were the labours of himself and his compatriots,
the work of their hands and our union, strength and
prosperity, the fruits of that work, best attest.

But to have essentially aided in presiding to his
country this consummation of her hopes neither sat-
isfied the claims of his fellow-citizens on his talents,
nor those duties which the possession of those talents
imposed. Heaven had not infused into his mind such
an uncommon share of intellectual spirit to re-
main unemployed, nor bestowed on him his genius

unaccompanied with the corresponding duty of de-
voting it to the common good. To have framed a
constitution, was shewing only, without realizing the
general happiness. This great work remained to be
done, and America, steadfast in her preference with one
voice summoned her beloved Washington, unpractised
as he was in the duties of civil administration, to exe-
cute this last act in the completion of the national
felicity. Obedient to her call, he assumed the high
office with that self-distrust peculiar to his innate mo-
desty, the constant attendant of pre-eminent virtue.
What was the burst of joy through our anxious land
on this exhilarating event is known to us all. The
aged, the young, the brave, the fair rivalled each
other in demonstrations of their gratitude; and this
high wrought delightful scene was heightened in its
effect, by the singular contrast between the zeal of the
bestowers and the avoidance of the receiver of the
honours bestowed. Commencing his administration,
what heart is not charmed with the recollection of the
pure and wise principles announced by himself, as
the basis of his political life. He best understood the
indissoluble union between virtue and happiness, be-
tween duty and advantage, between the genuine max-
ims of an honest and magnanimous policy, and the
solid rewards of public prosperity and individual felici-
ty: watching with an equal and comprehensive eye
over this vast assemblage of communities and interests,
he laid the foundations of our national policy in the
unerring immutable principles of morality, based on
religion, exemplifying the pre-eminence of free go-
vernment, by all the attributes which win the affec-
tions of its citizens or command the respect of the
world.

"O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint!"

Leading through the complicated difficulties pro-
duced by previous obligations and conflicting interests,
seconded by succeeding houses of congress, enlighten-
ed and patriotic, he surmounted all original obstruc-
tions, and brightened the path of our national felicity.

The presidential term expiring, his solicitude to
exchange exaltation for humility returned, with a
force increased with increase of age, and he had pre-
pared his farewell address to his countrymen, pro-
claiming his intention, when the united interposition
of all around him, enforced by the eventful prospects
of the epoch, produced a further sacrifice of inclina-
tion to duty. The election of president followed, and
Washington by the unanimous vote of the nation, was
called to resume the chief magistracy: what a won-
derful fixure of confidence! which attracts most our
admiration, a people so correct, or a citizen com-
bining an assemblage of talents forbidding rivalry, and
stiffing even envy itself? Such a nation ought to be
happy, such a chief must be for ever revered.

War, long menaced by the Indian tribes, now broke
out; and the terrible conflict deluging Europe with
blood, began to shed its baneful influence over our
happy land. To the first, outstretching his invincible
arm, under the orders of the gallant Wayne, the Ame-
rican eagle soared triumphant through distant forests.
Peace followed victory, and the melioration of the
condition of the enemy followed peace. Godlike vir-
tue which uplifts even the subdued savage.

To the second he opposed himself. New and
delicate was the conjuncture; and great was the
stake. Soon did his penetrating mind discern and
seize the only course, concurring to us all, the felicity
enjoyed. He issued his proclamation of neutrality.
This index to him whose subsequent conduct was
sanctioned by the approbation of both houses of con-
gress, and by the approving voice of the people.

To this sublime policy he inviolably adhered, un-
moved by foreign intrusion, unshaken by domestic
turbulence.

"Iustum et tenacem propositi virtus"

"Non civium ardor prava jubentium"

"Non vultus instans tyranni"

"Mente quatit solida"

Maintaining his pacific system at the expense of no
duty, America, faithful to herself and unflinced in
her honour, continued to enjoy the delights of peace,
while afflicted Europe mourns in every quarter, under
the accumulated miseries of an unexampled war;
miseries to which our happy country must have shared,
had not our pre-eminent Washington been as firm in
council as he was brave in the field.

Pursuing steadfastly his course, he held safe the pub-
lic happiness, preventing foreign war, and quelling
internal discord, till the revolving period of a third
election approached, when he executed his interrupted
but longings desire of returning to the humble
walks of private life.

The promulgation of his fixed resolution stopped the
anxious wishes of an affectionate people from adding
a third unanimous testimonial of their unabated con-
fidence in the man so long enthroned in their hearts.
When, before, war affliction like this exhibited on
earth?—Turn over the records of ancient Greece—
Review the annals of mighty Rome—examine the
volumes of modern Europe; you search in vain.